

I am here to thank you for all the efforts that you have undertaken in order to support Lebanon, particularly the military institutions of Lebanon.

We are also very proud of Lebanese Americans, who are around a million of them here, occupy very important position in the United States. And they work very sincerely for their country here as well as for their original homeland.

Mr. President, we share with the United States many of the human values and many of the cultural values. We promote and we believe very strongly in democracy and the principles of democracy. We believe in the promotion of liberty, all liberties, as well as the protection of human rights.

Mr. President, we work against bigotry and those who try to promote it, and certainly, we work very hard to combat terror. There are so many things in common between the American people and the Lebanese people.

We are here also to reaffirm our right in having a prosperous Lebanon, a democratic Lebanon, a country that it is diverse in its nature and through its people, but that in itself is wealth—the wealth of the power—and the power of the people of Lebanon. And that adds to the value of the Middle East and the Arab world and the entire world.

Mr. President, we are also here to reaffirm the need to liberate all Lebanese territories and also to make it very clear that the future of Palestinian refugees is in their homeland, not in Lebanon. Mr. President, we believe that this is in the interest of Lebanon as well as it's in the interest of the Palestinian people themselves.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. Yes, sir. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Sleiman spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority September 25, 2008

President Bush. Mr. President, welcome back. You and I have met a lot since I have

been the President and you have been the President. And I appreciate your determination and your desire to have a Palestinian state, and I share that desire with you.

It's not easy. No doubt it must be frustrating at times for you, because it's hard work to get a state after all these years. But nevertheless, there is a firm determination on your part and on my part to give the Palestinians a place where there can be dignity and hope.

We are working hard with you on security matters. We're working hard with you on helping the international community help you get the economy going in the West Bank. And I welcome you back.

As you know, I've got 4 more months left in office, and I'm hopeful that the vision that you and I have worked on can come to pass. And my only pledge to you is that I'll continue to work hard to see that it can come to pass. And so I welcome you back, and I think it's safe for me to say, I welcome you back, my friend.

President Abbas. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I am delighted, as well as the members of my delegation, to come here again to Washington and meet with you. We've met together for numerous times. Mr. President, we know very well how important this issue is for you, and we will continue to work very hard together in order to realize your vision of two states living side by side.

There is no doubt that you have done a great deal, Mr. President, and you have exerted a great deal of efforts aiming at achieving that vision that we will work together to achieve. Your efforts, Mr. President, as well as your vision, both help us and the Israelis to work very hard during the last year and since the convening of the Annapolis conference. Hope will remain, Mr. President. We cannot live without hope. We will continue to work to achieve and realize that hope.

And, Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you and thank the United States for the help and the support and the aid that you have given us, and as well as the efforts that you led to mobilize the world to help the Palestinian Authority

in—on the economic front as well as on the security front.

Mr. President, we will continue to work with you, and we will continue to keep the hope alive in order to reach a political solution for our issue and for the Middle East.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:13 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. President Abbas spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Members of Congress

September 25, 2008

I want to thank the leaders of the House and the Senate for coming. I appreciate our Presidential candidates for being here as well.

We are in a serious economic crisis in the country if we don't pass a piece of legislation. I want to thank the spirit of bipartisan cooperation that's taking place here in Washington. One thing the American people have to know is that all of us around the table take this issue very seriously, and we know we've got to get something done as quickly as possible. And this meeting is an attempt to move the process forward. My hope is that we can reach an agreement very shortly.

I want to thank the Secretary of the Treasury for working hard with the Members. I thank the Members for working long hours like they've been doing to come up with a solution that's bipartisan and that will solve the problem.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Presidential nominee Barack Obama; and Republican Presidential nominee John McCain. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India

September 25, 2008

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, once again, it's my honor to welcome you back to the Oval Office, and it will be my honor to share a meal with you tonight. I thank you for coming to Washington from New York. It's very kind of you to come. I appreciate your friendship, and I appreciate your leadership.

You and I have worked hard to change the relationship between our countries. India is a great country with an incredibly bright future. And it's in the U.S. interests to have a good, strong strategic relationship with India. And we've worked hard to achieve that.

One such sign of that relationship is the India-U.S. civilian nuclear agreement. This has taken a lot of work on both our parts, a lot of courage on your part. And of course, we want the agreement to satisfy you and come—get out of our Congress. And so we're working hard to get it passed as quickly as possible.

We talked about trade. We talked about the environment and how technologies will make it such that we can grow our economies and be good stewards of the environment.

I'll never forget my visit to your country, Mr. Prime Minister. I remember telling my friends, when I got back, what an exciting place India is. There's a vibrancy and energy, and there's a entrepreneurial spirit that's very strong. And I congratulate you and your government for enhancing that entrepreneurial spirit.

I thank you for your advice on a range of matters. I appreciated very much your briefing on the neighborhood in which you live. It's very informative, and it helps me make decisions and helps me formulate policy.

All in all, ours is a very strong relationship, at a state level and at a personal level. And I appreciate you coming.

Prime Minister Singh. Mr. President, I know how busy you are with problems relating to the management of the financial crisis. That despite all these enormous pressures on